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Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4506th meeting

Wednesday, 3 April 2002, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Franco
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Fall
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Mauritius	Mr. Jingree
	Mexico	Ms. Lajous
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Singapore	Mr. Bhatia
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question

Letter dated 1 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/336)

Letter dated 2 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/342)

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02-31389 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Ole Peter Kolby, Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations, for his work as President of the Security Council in March 2002. I am convinced that I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Kolby and his entire delegation for the great diplomatic skill with which the President conducted the business of the Council last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question

Letter dated 1 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/336)

Letter dated 2 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/342)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mauritania, Namibia, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Lancry (Israel) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria), Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh), Mr. Fonseca (Brazil), Mr. Valdés (Chile), Mr. Requeijo Gual (Cuba), Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Satoh (Japan), Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein (Jordan), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Dorda (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia), Mr. Ould Deddach (Mauritania), Mr. Andjaba (Namibia), Mr. Al-Hinai (Oman), Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan), Mr. Shobokshi (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Kumalo (South Africa), Mr. Arias (Spain), Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia), Mr. Cengizer (Turkey), Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine), Mr. Al-Shamsi (United Arab Emirates) and Mr. Al-Ashtal (Yemen) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 3 April 2002 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, which will be issued as document S/2002/343 and which reads as follows:

> "I have the honour to request that, in accordance with its previous practice, the Security Council invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations to participate in the meeting of the Security Council to be held today, Wednesday, 3 April 2002, regarding the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem."

I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to participate in the meeting in accordance with the Council's provisional rules of procedure and with previous practice in this regard.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 3 April 2002 from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which reads as follows:

> "In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I have the

honour to request that I be invited to participate in the debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council."

On previous occasions, the Security Council has extended invitations to representatives of other United Nations bodies in connection with the consideration of matters on its agenda. In conformity with past practice in this matter, I propose that the Council extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now continue its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in response to requests contained in a letter dated 1 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, document S/2001/336, and in a letter dated 2 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, document S/2002/342.

The first speaker inscribed on my list is the Permanent Observer of Palestine, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and to express our personal pleasure at seeing you, the representative of the fraternal Russian Federation, in that position. We would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Norway for the active role he played while presiding over the Council last month and for his full cooperation with us during his presidency, in the course of which Security Council resolution 1402 (2002) was adopted.

The Security Council is meeting today at the request of the Arab Group and of the Non-Aligned Caucus. We highly appreciate that request. We express our appreciation to all the members of the Council for their serious and immediate handling of the grave situation resulting from Israel's new, bloody act of aggression against the Palestinian people, the Palestinian Authority and President Yasser Arafat. We specifically appreciate the Council's quick adoption of its important resolution 1402 (2002) on 30 March.

Three days ago, Mr. Ariel Sharon delivered yet another insane statement to be added to other ominous statements, starting with that in which he rejected any final settlement of the Palestinian question, continuing with that in which expressed his regret that he had not killed Chairman Arafat years ago, and ending with that in which he said that the only remaining open road is that of inflicting the greatest number of casualties on the Palestinian people. Mr. Sharon spoke of war and war alone in that statement. It seemed as if he were determined to take all of us in the Middle East to the precipice. He rejected a ceasefire and once again categorized the only potential partner for peace on the Palestinian side as an enemy. Yesterday Mr. Sharon added yet another insolent and insane statement when he suggested that President Arafat could leave his country and homeland.

Alongside that statement, the Israeli occupation forces broadened the scope of their military attacks and aggression against our Palestinian people, which started six days ago. They reoccupied the cities of Qalqilya, Tulkarm, Beit Jala and Bethlehem, and today Jenin was added to the list. The Israeli forces continue, particularly in the city of Ramallah, to carry out heinous crimes, including war crimes and State terrorism. The Israeli occupation forces have killed many Palestinians, including five members of the Palestinian forces in an apartment three days ago; some of those killed had surrendered two days earlier. The occupation forces have shelled individuals and sites with heavy weaponry and helicopter gunships. They have attacked churches and hospitals and have prevented ambulances and medical teams from reaching their destinations.

In Bethlehem, the Israeli forces have imposed a military siege against the Church of the Nativity, where Christ, peace be upon Him, was born. Can Council members imagine that? Tanks surrounding the Church of the Nativity? God forbid that the world might be witnessing the devastation of the Church of the Nativity in addition to previous massacres, such as the carnage at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps.

The occupation forces have prevented any media presence in Ramallah. They have declared the city a closed military zone and have shot at journalists. They have shut off water and electricity throughout the city's

neighbourhoods and have imposed a curfew. They have broken into homes, rounding up men and youths and taking them to detention centres, where they are pressured, beaten and humiliated.

It is difficult for us to enumerate all the developments, taking into consideration the insane escalation caused by the Israeli forces. The Israeli forces have caused destruction in all our cities, which is escalating by the hour. We welcome the international community to a scene recalling Warsaw under Nazi occupation, or any other European city occupied by the army of Nazi Germany.

Furthermore, the Israeli occupation forces continue to occupy President Arafat's headquarters after destroying most of it. They continue to lay siege to the small office within the headquarters, they continue to shoot at the office and try to tighten their grip over it in every way. Once again, we strongly warn of the dangers inherent in these practices that threaten Mr. Arafat's personal safety. He is the symbol of the Palestinian national identity and of the Palestinian struggle for liberation and independence.

Certain Israelis have insolently declared that the Israeli military attacks will continue for weeks. That would take us to the point of no return. It should be rejected decisively by the international community. But frankly, this Israeli position reminds us, unfortunately, that influential international players have provided cover for the whole series of Sharonic positions. We hope this will end soon so that we can truly put an end to the tragedy and return to the path of peace.

Yesterday Mr. Sharon also attempted, along with many other Israeli officials, to link what Israel is doing against the Palestinian people with what the United States had done in Afghanistan. That is cheap political prostitution that exploits the suffering in the United States following 11 September and that erodes the legitimacy of the fight against international terrorism. Our position against all terrorist acts, including the bombings in Israel, is clear and explicit. We condemn them in their entirety.

But Israel remains an occupation force. It has occupied our land for more than 35 years, during which it turned the occupation into a colonial settler occupation in which it transferred hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens to the occupied territories and built settlements on our land. Israel rejects our people's rights. It has worked against the realization of our right to self-determination and to the establishment of our independent State. Israel is the only occupying Power in the world. Israel is the country and the army that has committed war crimes and State terrorism. It is the State that continues to violate international law, international humanitarian law and relevant Security Council resolutions.

The main difference between what is occurring on the Israeli side and on the Palestinian side is that in the first case it is being carried out by a State army under Government orders, including war crimes and State terrorism, while in the second case it is being carried out by illegal groups that are condemned by the Palestinian Authority, which considers their acts to be against Palestinian national interests. That is the true picture. Failure to recognize this lacks ethical, political and legal validity; such a position can only seriously compromise the international community's task, including working to build peace throughout the world, and particularly waging the fight against terrorism.

Mr. Sharon's statement to which I referred earlier was his response to Security Council resolution 1402 (2002). We believe that, in the face of that response, the Security Council must seriously follow up on implementation of the resolution in order to ensure the immediate implementation of all its provisions. The immediate implementation of resolution 1402 (2002) is the only way to put an end to the rapid deterioration of the situation and to begin to get back on track.

In view of the fact that the resolution has not been implemented, the Arab Group has asked for the submission of a draft resolution demanding the immediate implementation of the provisions of resolution 1402 (2002). Some Council members have said that it is too early to adopt such a new resolution. For a people under siege there is no such thing as too early while the suffering, the siege and the humanitarian tragedy continue, along with their political repercussions. We appeal to the members of the Council to adopt such a draft resolution as soon as possible.

We are also convinced that following the implementation of resolution 1402 (2002), the Council must consider a way by which it can assist in moving things forward. There is no doubt that one of the means available would be the presence of an international third party on the ground to assist both parties in implementing the Tenet plan and the Mitchell

recommendations, advance the peace process and provide protection to the Palestinian people.

We would like once again to express our appreciation for the efforts made by the Secretary-General to end the ongoing tragedy and to get the situation back on the path to peace. We appreciate his initiative to meet with the Security Council, as well as the important statement he made to the Council. We are confident that the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative in the Middle East will continue their efforts in coordination with the Security Council. In this respect, we fully welcome the positions of the Secretary-General with regard to the immediate implementation of resolution 1402 (2002) and to an international third-party presence, as well as with regard for the need for a comprehensive approach that includes both the political and security dimensions. We call on the Security Council to respond positively and to adopt the same positions, which would truly lead to an end of the current tragic situation in the occupied territories and put the situation back on the road to peace.

I would like once again to thank all the members of the Council.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I think the Permanent Observer of Palestine for his kind words addressed to my delegation and my country.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Israel, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Lancry (Israel): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council, and to thank your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Norway, for his most able leadership.

The Council meets today at a critical moment for the peoples of the Middle East. In the past seven days there have been seven Palestinian suicide bombings in Israel, killing over 40 people and wounding well over 100. On our northern border, Hezbullah is attacking Israeli positions for the second day, following several weeks of escalating tensions in the area. Yesterday we met here in this Chamber and had a constructive discussion on how to address the current situation and on how we might best move forward. I appreciate the willingness of Council members to engage in a frank and open exchange of views in the spirit of dialogue.

We discussed resolution 1397 (2002), which Israel has fully accepted both in the vision it articulates and in the concrete steps it details. We have shown ourselves to be willing to fully implement this resolution, including the call for a genuine cessation of hostilities, terrorism and incitement and full implementation of the Tenet plan and the Mitchell report, and we had begun to take concrete steps in this direction prior to the Passover massacre last week, which led to the current deterioration. Indeed, every Israeli concession has been met with terrorism.

We also discussed resolution 1402 (2002), which Israel has not rejected. We recognize the positive elements of that resolution, namely, the call for a complete and meaningful ceasefire, which we firmly believe would lead to the withdrawal of Israeli troops. No one should doubt that when the violence and the terrorism have ended, so will the need for further Israeli military action. Indeed, the key elements of resolutions 1397 (2002) and 1402 (2002) are themselves the elements of the Tenet and Mitchell plans, which Israel has accepted and continually shown itself willing to implement. We still await a reciprocal Palestinian response.

It is widely said that the obstacle to a ceasefire, from the Palestinian perspective, is the lack of a political horizon. But one need only look at the lengthy list of agreements that have been reached in the past decade, the Security Council resolutions that have been adopted and the broad international consensus — including among the Israeli people — that the Palestinians are entitled to establish their own independent State. The Mitchell report, permanent status negotiations on the basis of resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the vision of two States expressed in resolution 1397 (2002) — this is the political horizon. But let us be very clear: even when there was the clearest and brightest political horizon, the Palestinians did nothing to curb violence and terror. After Israel extended a far- reaching peace proposal at Camp David in July 2000, the Palestinian leadership launched a campaign of violence against us. And even as the sides met and considered further enhancements to Mr. Barak's peace offer, namely, in the discussions conducted at Taba, Palestinian violence and terrorism still threatened the lives of Israelis.

The international community must recognize that the Palestinians have made a strategic choice to engage in terrorism for the achievement of political objectives.

While they speak of a strategic choice for peace, their true strategic place itself is out on television every day, and to gruesome effect. In such an atmosphere, Israel has no choice but to exercise its right and duty under international law to defend ourselves. This is a right that any State would exercise under the conditions that we have been facing, and in fact, several States have already done so. No State would tolerate continued daily assaults — suicidal terrorism — on the streets of its cities. Israel will continue to do what it deems necessary to protect ourselves against the threat. We will act not to occupy, but to uproot the terrorist infrastructure, even as Palestinian gunmen use Holy Sites — including Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity — as a bunker, firing at Israeli soldiers from its windows and seeking refuge in its sanctuary, in violation of the most basic norms.

But make no mistake, our hand remains extended in peace. Our immediate objective remains the achievement of a ceasefire. And our ultimate goal is the conclusion of a comprehensive and final settlement of the conflict. If you do not believe this, I invite the Palestinians, with the Security Council as a witness, to put us to the test. Let us call for an immediate ceasefire and begin implementing Tenet and Mitchell. Let us discover what underlies Prime Minister Sharon's proposal as to painful compromises. Put us to the test of peace. It is that simple. Do not look for any ambiguous political horizon.

The Security Council has an opportunity to facilitate this process by adopting the draft resolution that will probably be submitted and which calls for an immediate implementation of resolution 1402 (2002). If the Council is to act in a spirit of responsibility and balance, it must include, beside the demand of an immediate implementation of resolution 1402 (2002), a call for the Palestinian side to cease immediately the suicide bombings in Israel. We believe that this not only would be a more fair and balanced position but could be the impetus needed to achieve a genuine ceasefire, begin the withdrawal of Israeli troops and ultimately put both parties back on the path towards the process of dialogue, negotiations and, hopefully, final status achievement in peaceful coexistence.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Israel for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Tunisia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We hope that your work will be crowned with success. I would also like to thank the Ambassador of Norway for his excellent leadership of the Council during the previous month.

I would like to thank you sincerely, Sir, for your rapid response in convening this emergency meeting, which is taking place in the light of the dangerous deterioration of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, despite the recently adopted Security Council resolutions, namely resolutions 1397 (2002) and 1402 (2002), the latter being adopted last Saturday.

Israel's immediate rejection of resolution 1402 (2002) and the dangerous escalation of the activities of the Israeli armed forces in the occupied Palestinian territories, as well as the continuation of the siege imposed on President Arafat's compound, represent a flagrant defiance of international law and international humanitarian law. They clearly demonstrate that the policy of the Government of Prime Minister Sharon is based on a rejection of the peace option and is an endeavour to abort any international or Arab initiative that could lead to a comprehensive and just settlement of the Middle East problem.

The fact that the Israeli Prime Minister has threatened to exile President Arafat from his country and homeland marks a new stage in the deterioration of the situation, revealing the genuine intentions of Prime Minister Sharon, who has flagrantly disregarded international law, international humanitarian law and the 1949 Geneva Convention. Those actions confirm that he is continuing his policy of physical elimination, that he is perpetrating war crimes punishable under international law and that he considers the reoccupied Palestinian territories as zones closed to journalists and the media. This is further evidence of Prime Minister Sharon's intentions, namely, the physical elimination and genocide of the unarmed Palestinian population.

We consider that Israel's persistence in pursuing such a futile policy and political adventurism not only is harmful to the civilian population but will also have serious repercussions for the Israelis themselves. In

fact, the excessive recourse to military force does not guarantee the security of Israel. It can, in fact, lead to further deterioration and to a flare-up in the region as a whole, thereby creating a clear threat to international peace and security.

In the light of this painful situation, we consider that there is no alternative to withdrawing all Israeli forces from all occupied Palestinian territories, the lifting of the siege imposed on President Arafat's compound and addressing immediately the security situation so that peace negotiations can be resumed.

The Arab States hope that the Security Council will now call for the immediate implementation of resolutions 1397 (2002) and 1402 (2002) — as strongly called for by the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, during his meeting with the Council and in his presentation of his report — while recalling the need for the immediate application of operative paragraph 1 of resolution 1402 (2002) without any linkage, as called for by the Secretary-General and the previous Security Council President, the Ambassador of Norway. This should be done before a vote is taken on any resolution.

International protection for the Palestinian people has become one of the most urgent and overriding requirements because this is the only guarantee available thus far to halt the dangerous and very tragic escalation of violence.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Tunisia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Ukraine. I invite him to take a seat at the Council and to make his statement.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): I would like to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I am confident that, under your able leadership, the Council will effectively address burning issues of peace and security, specifically the situation in the Middle East. My thanks also go to Ambassador Kolby of Norway and his delegation for the way in which they guided the Council during the month of March.

Ukraine is participating in this debate to express its deep concern about the extremely dangerous situation in the Middle East. Each time the Security Council considers this issue, it seems that the situation has already reached its most critical point and that common sense will guide the parties from the path of violence to the path of dialogue. Much to our regret, that logic has not been working in the Middle East, and violence continues to dominate over wisdom.

Ukraine has condemned in the strongest terms possible the recent terrorist acts in Israel, specifically those in Netanya, Jerusalem and Haifa. No one can justify the killing of innocent civilians. We call on the Palestinian leadership to take urgent and decisive action to prevent terrorist acts and to stop the activities of terrorist networks. They endanger the prospects for peace in the region and are not bringing the Palestinian people closer to the fulfilment of their legitimate aspiration to a Palestinian State.

However, one cannot realistically demand that the Palestinian Authority and its elected President, Yasser Arafat, fight terror while at the same time eliminating their ability to do so. Israel must stop the devastating raids into Palestinian-controlled territory, the excessive use of force and the attacks on heavily populated areas. Most immediately, we urge Israel to put an end to the siege of the headquarters of Yasser Arafat and to withdraw its forces from Ramallah and other Palestinian cities. The use of force will not bring security to Israel and its people.

Ukraine is confident that there can be no military solution to the conflict and that none of the problems that separate the Israeli and Palestinian peoples can be resolved by means of force and violence. It is necessary to look beyond the hatred and despair and to find, through negotiation, the political solution that will bring a comprehensive, just and lasting peace to the Middle East. To achieve that goal, both security and political efforts should be pursued in parallel.

Only last week, the Arab League summit adopted a historic decision on the initiative of Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, offering to establish normal relations with Israel and to provide security for all States in the region, in exchange for full Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied since 1967 and Israel's acceptance of a Palestinian State. On the eve of the summit, the Security Council adopted resolution 1397 (2002), which affirmed the vision of a region where two States — Israel and Palestine — live side by side within secure and recognized borders.

Ukraine welcomes both of those decisions; they restore a clear political perspective to the settlement

process and outline a concept of comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and on the principle of land for peace. The implementation of the Tenet work plan and the Mitchell committee recommendations would help negotiations to resume so as to make this vision a reality.

These positive and encouraging steps should not fall victim to the deadly explosion of shells. We urge the parties to seize this opportunity and to implement, unconditionally and without delay, the provisions of the most recent Security Council resolutions on the subject — resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1397 (2002) — in fulfilment of their commitments under the United Nations Charter. It is indeed unacceptable that the Council's decisions should be ignored at a time when, at last, the Council has become fully engaged in the settlement of the conflict.

Of particular importance is the need for the maximum mobilization and coordination of international diplomatic efforts aimed at breaking the deadlock in the crisis and resuming peace negotiations. It has become evident that the parties cannot achieve this on their own. The Security Council should continue to remain seized of the matter; in particular, it might return to consideration of a third-party mechanism.

We also welcome in this regard the ongoing efforts of General Zinni and the "quartet", and we consider the personal involvement of the Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, in the process as a critically important factor. As an active participant in all of these efforts, Ukraine is ready to further contribute to this end.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Ukraine for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Security Council is holding an open debate for the second time in less than 96 hours in an attempt to find a way out of the tragic circumstances to which the people of Palestine are being subjected as a result of the continued Israeli acts of aggression inside the territories of the Palestinian Authority and inside the compound of its legitimately elected leadership.

Once again, we would like to reiterate that Israeli defiance — its refusal to implement Security Council resolutions, most recent among them resolution 1402 (2002) — will lead to further deterioration. The peace and security of the Israeli people, which Israel claims to be seeking, will not come about unless security for the Palestinian people is realized. Peace will not be achieved unless the Palestinian people obtain their rights in full.

What is required today of the Security Council is for it to reaffirm its earlier resolutions. The Council must call for an immediate Israeli withdrawal from the Palestinian territories, an immediate lifting of the siege imposed on Palestinian cities and an end to all forms of aggression against the Palestinian people and its legitimate leadership. The Israeli Government must realize that all aspects of its aggression against Palestine are doomed to failure, because the Palestinian people will stand up forcefully to such aggression and will continue its resistance to end Israeli occupation of its territories. The occupation is the origin of the problem. It must be ended immediately if the region is to enjoy stability and calm.

Many Israeli government officials speak of peace. They speak of a desire to live in peace with the Palestinians. They say that they are extending their hand in peace. These are claims that no one in his right mind can believe any longer, in the light of what we see clearly on our television screens. Israel is asking for a unique kind of peace: a peace built on attempts to subdue Palestinians so that they will accept the occupation of their territories, which are subjected to forcible settler colonization by terrorist elements for whom armed force is a way of life. Israel is asking for peace, but under conditions tantamount to transforming the Palestinian people into splinter groups living in isolated bantustans in the service of the Israeli economy and Israeli society, or into refugees exiled from their land or prisoners allowed to stay there under aggression and tyranny.

Those who speak of civilization and barbarism must learn from history that barbarism is, at best, the occupation of other people's territory, settler colonization and the killing or physical liquidation of those who resist or oppose. That is the true face of barbarism, which we thought we had left behind us 57

years ago. They speak of democracy and of the free world. They say they are part and parcel of democracy and of the free world. To them, I say that the free world does not occupy the territory of others by force and does not subject other peoples to occupation. True democracies do not occupy the territory of others and do not commit aggression against what is not rightfully theirs. Let them stop the lies, because they can no longer convince anyone.

The situation calls for a very conscientious and in-depth look at what is really required. Egypt calls for international action, through the Security Council, that would achieve a final and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. What is required for the attainment of that objective is an agreement on the necessary elements of any settlement. They are well known to all of us and can be summarized as follows: first, Israeli withdrawal from the Palestinian territories occupied since 5 June 1967; secondly, the establishment of an independent, sovereign Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital; thirdly, arrangements guaranteeing security for all parties on an equal footing in terms of rights and commitments; and fourthly, the establishment, after all withdrawals have been carried out, of comprehensive peaceful relations, good-neighbourly relations and constructive cooperation among the region's States and peoples on the basis I set out earlier — the Madrid formula of land for peace, endorsed by the international community and accepted by the parties. Or at least we thought they had been accepted by the parties.

The importance of those principles, as well as the need for them to be part of any settlement plan, must be reaffirmed. That would lead to a measure of confidence-building in this political process, which must be restarted after Israel's attempt to demolish it. This plan will lead us to negotiations on the details of such a just and comprehensive final settlement, whose elements we reviewed a moment ago.

Once again, I reiterate that Israel's continued occupation, acts of aggression, attempts at repression and failure to recognize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State on its land will only lead to further suffering by both Palestinians and Israelis. The forces of aggression, darkness and terror cannot be victorious. All involved must shoulder their responsibilities — primarily the States members of the Security Council, and in particular the permanent members. They all bear a special responsibility, and they cannot forget, or claim to have forgotten, it.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Spain, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the European Free Trade Association country belonging to the European Economic Area Iceland align themselves with this statement.

Today the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the European Union are holding a special meeting in Luxembourg to discuss the tragic situation in the Middle East.

Since the Security Council public meeting that took place last Friday night, the situation of terror and violence on the ground has escalated further. The European Union is dismayed at this seemingly unending spiral of death, destruction, revenge and reprisal. We reiterate our urgent call on both sides to take immediate and effective action to stop the bloodshed. Terror and violence must stop. The Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Government must prove their leadership and assume their responsibilities with respect to their own peoples. Months and years of violence should have taught us that we cannot conceive of a military solution to this conflict.

We reiterate that there is no military solution to this conflict. The language and the logic of war have to stop and be replaced by dialogue and negotiation. Peace and security for both parties can be achieved only through negotiation. In this regard, it is essential to address and implement security, political and economic measures in parallel and simultaneously in a single process.

The European Union warmly welcomes the adoption of Security Council resolution 1402 (2002), which reflects the grave concern and the strong commitment of the international community. Resolutions 1397 (2002) and 1402 (2002) must both be implemented immediately, in particular the demand for

an immediate cessation of violence, including acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction; the call for both parties to move immediately to a meaningful ceasefire; the call for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian cities, including Ramallah; and the call for the parties to cooperate fully with Special Envoy Zinni and others to implement the Tenet work plan and the Mitchell report's recommendations, with the aim of resuming negotiations on a political settlement.

The European Union wishes to recall the common understanding of the Security Council members that operative paragraph 1 of resolution 1402 (2002) does not indicate — I repeat, does not indicate — any sequence of the elements listed, as stated by the Council President.

The European Union condemns in the most categorical terms the latest terrorist attacks and reiterates its demands to the Palestinian Authority and to its President, Mr. Arafat, to adopt all possible measures to stop the cycle of violence, to dismantle all terrorist networks and to ensure that initiators and perpetrators of the attacks of recent days do not go unpunished. However, the legitimate fight of Israel against terrorism and its reaction to the brutal attacks also have to be compatible with the effective operating capacity of the Palestinian Authority and of its President, legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people. This capacity should in no way be weakened.

Therefore, the European Union urges an end to the occupation of the headquarters of the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah and to the isolation and restriction of movement of President Arafat, and calls for the immediate withdrawal of the Israeli Defence Forces from that city and from other areas under the control of the Palestinian Authority. Closures and other restrictions must be lifted immediately. There is nothing to be gained by destroying the Palestinian Authority. Peace cannot be achieved by ignoring or continually humiliating one's opponent, or simply hoping to destroy him.

Israel, notwithstanding its right to fight terrorism, must respect international law. The practice of extrajudicial killings is contrary to international law. The use of excessive force cannot be justified. The actions against medical and humanitarian institutions and personnel are absolutely unacceptable and contrary to United Nations conventions and international humanitarian law. Such personnel must be able to perform their functions fully. Both parties must respect international humanitarian standards and protect civilian lives.

The European Union welcomes the resolution adopted at the summit of the League of Arab States in Beirut, which could be a solid basis for progress towards a political perspective for a fair and comprehensive peace in the region and the establishment of normal relations between Israel and the Arab world, safeguarding the security of all countries involved and offering them a future of stability and prosperity.

The European Union is currently in close contact with the parties, the countries in the region, the United States, the United Nations and Russia. In order to break this cycle of unprecedented violence, the "quartet" of special envoys must be given full access to all parties to try to help them to achieve an immediate ceasefire. Diplomat and consular representatives must also have full access to their own citizens in the territories and be able to fully perform their tasks.

In the face of escalating violence and mutual distrust, the European Union remains convinced that an impartial monitoring mechanism is called for, and we urge the parties to accept observers. The European Union and its member States stand ready to participate in such a monitoring mechanism.

Israel needs recognition of its right to live in peace within secure boundaries guaranteed by the international community, in particular the Arab countries. At the same time the Palestinian people also need the recognition of their right to live in peace, in a democratic, viable and independent State of Palestine, bringing an end to the 1967 occupation. We reaffirm that a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the conflict must be based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 1397 (2002) and on the principles of the Madrid Conference, of Oslo and subsequent agreements.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, we are very pleased to see you presiding over the Council this month, and we thank

you for having convened this timely public meeting on the grave situation in the Palestinian territories. My gratitude goes also to Ambassador Kolby of Norway for the praiseworthy manner in which he conducted the work of the Council last month.

The situation in the occupied Palestinian territories has continued to deteriorate since the Council last met on this issue. The bloody campaign against defenceless civilians in the occupied territories goes on unabated. Palestinians are trapped and besieged by Israeli tanks and other state-of-the-art weapons generously made available to the Israeli regime. All-out repression, excessive use of force, collective punishment against an entire people — a people that has been enclosed and humiliated — have thus far fuelled the endless cycle of violence and could engulf the entire Middle East region. Media reports indicating that food supplies and medicine are rapidly running out in the besieged towns are further cause for concern.

At a time when the plight of the Palestinians is the focus of the entire international community and when public opinion throughout the world finds the atrocities committed by the Israeli troops to be increasingly appalling, the Israeli regime, in order to conceal its crimes in the Palestinian territories, is increasingly taking on journalists who are struggling to cover the aggression and its serious impact on civilians. In so doing, Israeli troops curb and even deliberately fire upon reporters with a view to intimidating and dissuading them from carrying on their work. Moreover, hundreds of peace activists, mainly Europeans, as well as medical teams, are abused and fired upon.

Decades of struggle by the Palestinian people for their right to self-determination have clearly demonstrated that the repressive policy atrociously employed by the Zionists has thus far only hardened the resolve of the Palestinians. The intensity of resistance that the people under Israeli occupation are currently exhibiting is truly unprecedented in the past half-century. Evidently, it puts the occupiers on notice that, unless the aspirations of the Palestinians are realized and their rights restored, they should expect graver consequences by the day.

In the midst of the tragic events taking place in the course of the ongoing conflict, the international community must contemplate the reasons that prompt Palestinian teenagers and youngsters, who normally should be seeing a bright future ahead, to sacrifice their lives. It should be borne in mind that the exceptionality of the response demonstrates the exceptionally ruthless crimes committed against the Palestinian people over a very long period of time — crimes that, by any measure, are unprecedented, even in comparison to similar instances in the colonial era.

Undoubtedly, approaching the issue simplistically, playing the blame game and restoring repetitious and superficial rhetoric by evoking terrorism will, in this case, lead nowhere. Each time the Israelis bulldoze more Arab homes and each time they kill Palestinians and their hopes, they create more militants. This may go on and on forever. What is now unfolding in the Palestinian territories is a struggle for national liberation and the right of self-determination stolen from the Palestinian people for so long.

By refusing to withdraw from Palestinian towns, as stipulated in Security Council resolution 1402 (2002), and, contrarily, by strengthening its occupation, the Israeli regime is bluntly defying the will of the international community, represented by this Council. It is very unfortunate that those who stretch and baselessly interpret Council resolutions just to advance their narrow interests are now grasping at straws in flouting the letter and spirit of a clear-cut resolution.

There is no doubt that selective enforcement of the Council's resolutions has an adverse impact on the authority of the Council, thereby undermining the entire international security system. We urge the Council to heed the call of the international community, to live up to its Charter responsibility and to take further effective action to halt the ongoing bloody action against the Palestinian people. The Israeli act of taking advantage of the defencelessness of the Palestinians is repugnant and, if the Council does not act to put an end to it, more bloodshed may lie ahead.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Satoh (Japan): I found it very embarrassing here today to have to choose between the two seats —

one on the side of Israel and the other on the side of Palestine. I want to tell both my Palestinian and my Israeli colleagues that my sitting here today on this side does not mean anything more than sheer convenience. I cannot divide myself. I hope that the Security Council can find a way for us to sit in a more politically comfortable way in the future.

The Government of Japan is gravely concerned over the escalating violence and terror in Israel and the Palestinian autonomous territories, which include the series of terrorist attacks by Palestinian extremists and the military campaign into Palestinian cities by the Israeli Defence Forces.

We are particularly concerned over the killing of innocent civilians, which can never be justified. In the past six days alone, more than 80 Israelis and Palestinians have reportedly been killed and hundreds more injured. We extend our deep condolences and sympathies to all the victims and their families.

It is all the more deplorable that these events are occurring at a time when there are constructive developments for peace in the region. These include, first, the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 1397 (2002), which affirmed, for the first time, a vision of a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, would live side by side and within secure and recognized borders; and secondly, the Arab peace initiative adopted at the Arab summit meeting, based on the proposal of Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia.

The Japanese Government condemns in the strongest terms all acts of terrorism aimed at innocent civilians. We have urged the Palestinian Authority at various levels to do its utmost to suppress extremists. Last Friday in Tokyo, Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi urged the Palestinian Authority, through the visiting Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, Mr. Abu Ala, to act immediately against those responsible for terrorist actions.

At the same time, the Government of Japan has urged the Israeli Government to exert maximum restraint. In a telephone conversation last Saturday, Foreign Minister Kawaguchi told the Israeli Foreign Minister, Mr. Shimon Peres, that the incursions into Palestinian cities by Israeli forces and putting the headquarters of Chairman Arafat under siege were not conducive to restoring calm to the situation. She also called for the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from Palestinian cities. It should be recalled that Mr. Arafat is the legitimate leader of the Palestinian people, elected through a democratic process.

The Security Council, with its recent resolution 1402 (2002), has once again sent a strong message to both parties to put an end to the escalation of violence and return to the negotiating table. The Government of Japan fully supports that resolution and requests the parties concerned to implement it without delay.

We also regard American engagement indispensable in order to break the impasse and bring the peace process back on track. In this context, the mission of General Zinni of the United States, who remains in the region to continue his mediation efforts, is of utmost importance. The Government of Japan appeals to both parties to respond positively to his efforts and to achieve a ceasefire agreement as soon as possible. To that end, it dispatched to the region its special envoy, Ambassador Hiroshi Shigeta, in order to support General Zinni's efforts. The Government of Japan is determined to extend all possible assistance to the efforts to improve the situation.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Yemen. I invite him to take the seat reserved for him at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Ashtal (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like at the outset to express my sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. Also, I cannot fail to express our deep appreciation to Ambassador Kolby for his successful presidency of the Security Council last month. Allow me to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan. His positions on the deteriorating situation in the Palestinian territories have been characterized by wisdom, courage and a sense of responsibility. Ever since he delivered his now famous statement before the Security Council on 21 February (*see S/PV.4474*), he has been placing before the international community positive views that contribute to a resolution of the current grave situation.

The explosive situation in the occupied Palestinian territory is increasingly dangerous. Since Israel decided to launch an extensive war against the Palestinians, we have been witnessing a genuine tragedy. Israeli tanks and warplanes attack Palestinian cities, while the headquarters compound of the elected Palestinian President, Yasser Arafat, is under total

siege, and he and his aides are being humiliated through the cutting of basic electricity and water services.

The Security Council is meeting today for three reasons. The first is that Israeli acts of aggression have expanded. The number of wounded and dead increases daily, and destruction continues as we speak. Secondly, Israeli aggression has widened to such an extent that it now threatens peace and security in the entire region. Thirdly, the Council is meeting because Israel refuses to accept resolution 1402 (2002). Even though Israel's representative today claimed that Israel accepts the resolution, it refuses to implement it because it calls for a ceasefire and a simultaneous withdrawal of Israeli forces from Palestinian cities. Furthermore, the resolution stresses that withdrawal from Palestinian cities, including Ramallah, must take place immediately. More than 96 hours later, the resolution remains a dead letter.

Instead, Israel has reinvaded other cities in a broad plan to reoccupy Palestinian territory. Israel is also attempting to undermine the Palestinian Authority and to destroy its infrastructure, including leadership installations, official buildings and other civilian installations.

Arab public opinion boils over as it watches television screens showing the criminal acts perpetrated by the Israeli army. We wish this Council could view those images in order to see the truth of the assassinations, the attacks on ambulances and other inhuman acts. Denunciation has not come just from the Arab world; it has come from many other world capitals, including in the form of large demonstrations.

We call on the Security Council to reaffirm resolution 1402 (2002), which calls for a withdrawal of Israeli troops from Ramallah and other Palestinian cities. We call on the Council also to take a decision reaffirming the need to deploy international peacekeeping forces and international observers to supervise the withdrawal and to separate the two parties, the Palestinians and the Israelis. The defenceless Palestinian people, under blatant Israeli attack, cannot defend itself because of the massive imbalance of military force. How can a Kalashnikov rifle face Merkava tanks or Apache helicopters?

The Republic of Yemen, through the positions taken by President Ali Abdullah Saleh as reflected in his statement at the Beirut Arab summit, has expressed the Yemeni people's solidarity with and support for the struggle of the Palestinian people in this dark hour, as it faces the barbarity of the heavily armed Israeli forces. As stated by President Saleh, we also stand in full solidarity with our brother Yasser Arafat, the elected President of the Palestinian people, who is now encircled by the Israeli occupation forces, as he stands steadfast defending his people and its dignity.

We urge the Council to take a strong stand to compel Israel to abide by resolution 1402 (2002) and the previous resolution on this matter, resolution 1379 (2001), and to withdraw from Palestinian towns and cities, including Ramallah, or, if Israel continues its rejection, to take the necessary measures under Chapter VII of the Charter.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Yemen for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Dorda (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, Mr. President, let me convey to you our greetings and express our appreciation for implementing the first part of rule 48 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council by enabling the international community, on whose behalf you work, to participate in the work of the Council. We truly appreciate that.

Secondly, let me say from the beginning that my statement will be directed to minds and to consciences. My statement will also be a record for future events and for history. Nothing continues eternally. God alone is eternal. We are born, we live, and we die. We are recording for future generations to see that words of truth were uttered in the Security Council when it seemed that right had no place to thrive on this planet. Might has become right, and it seems that there are no rights and no might whatsoever for any in this world at this particular time.

To describe history, for my statement to be directed to consciences and to record history, I would say the following.

First, throughout history — and I would challenge any person to come forward with any atlas or geographic map with the word Israel in any part of this

world — that name has never been applied to a single inch of land. The name Israel is the name of the prophet Jacob, and when God spoke to the Israelites he said, you sons of Jacob. Never in history or geography was there ever a State called Israel on Palestinian land.

Secondly, four countries were put forward as candidates for a Jewish homeland: Argentina; Uganda; Jabal Al-Akhdar in my country, Libya; and Palestine. So what rights exist in Argentina, Uganda, Jabal Al-Akhdar in Libya, or even Palestine?

Thirdly, we must differentiate between two things: nationalism or nationhood and religion. For me to worship God as a Muslim, following the word of Mohammed, does not mean that I am not Libyan. Golda Meir and Peres came from Byelorussia, their country. Being Jewish is a religious issue; it has nothing at all to do with nationality or nationhood. Sharon also was never Palestinian. Begin came from Poland; he was Polish. His homeland was Poland, not Palestine. Netanyahu is American. He is a New Yorker from Brooklyn, I believe.

If they have the right to settle in Palestine because Moses, may God bless his memory, was born there or received the word of God there, that argument would also apply to Christians. Jesus, may God bless His memory, was born in Palestine. The word of God came to Him in Palestine. If that argument can also be applied, then all Muslims, from Indonesia all the way to the United States of America, can also go and settle Mecca and Medina, in Saudi Arabia. Where does faith connect with nationalism or nationality? Palestine is for Palestinians — Muslims, Christians or Jews, the oriental Jews who have lived in Palestine.

Fourthly, there has been talk about peace. Let us review that. Our brothers, the Palestinians, were told: put your liberation efforts aside, sit at the negotiating table in a political process, and they went along that path. They went everywhere they could, from Oslo to Madrid to Wye River to Wye Plantation to Wye-I-do-not-know-where to Camp David to Sharm el-Sheikh. No stone was left unturned. So what happened? Did they obtain anything? Did the other party comply with its previously signed agreements? Not at all.

Look at the latest issue of *Time* magazine. At least it is not a Libyan magazine; I think you all know that. There is a map in it. I am sure that members have seen it. However, kindly look at it again. Members may note that what is left of the West Bank and Gaza Strip is now all settlements. All these places are settlements.

What will negotiation be about? The land already has been filled with colonial settlements. What will be returned to the Palestinians? Hundreds of villages and towns have been built on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. What is to be returned? The land cannot be returned because it is now full of new settlers from the four corners of the globe. The Palestinians are deported, are exiled from their land. Those who have been exiled are prohibited from returning. Palestinians own the lands where the settlements were built. Their homes were destroyed, their farms were destroyed, and even the trees were bulldozed and uprooted.

What is left for the Palestinians? What are the Palestinians to build a State upon? After all that, the Palestinian who attempts to defend his home, honour, children, whose land is being usurped, whose home is being bulldozed, whose trees are being uprooted, is labelled a terrorist. Where is the logic in that? The terrorist who is now occupying is given the legitimate right to defend himself. What right? He is aggressing. He is killing. He is beating. He is occupying, and he is uprooting the trees of others. He is building settlements on that land. He brings in new settlers from all over the globe. That person has the right to defend settler colonialism? Where is the logic in that?

That is the very logic that has turned young boys and girls into martyrs who have decided to die in order to free their land and their own personal and family property. They do so in defence of their freedom. So have they become terrorists? That logic can be stood squarely on its head. This is a provocation to the world and to all free peoples. This is turning logic on its head. We thank them because they have unmasked Arab regimes even of the very fig leaf of that logic. We also thank them for having revitalized the Arab street.

I have previously said in both the Security Council and in the General Assembly that our region is pregnant and that no one can say whether the child to be born will be healthy or not. Most probably, the child will not be healthy. Legitimacy has now been bestowed upon all forces, whether religious, nationalist or otherwise. They have all been given the green light for change, including, most regrettably, religious extremist organizations. They have been given great legitimacy.

An Arab President is being detained and the very dignity of an Arab people is being raped and overrun

by tanks and bulldozers on its own land. The Arab peoples can therefore only step on the Arab regimes that are now kneeling in cowardice. In those circumstances the Council will be utterly helpless and able to do absolutely nothing because the will of the people in the streets of the Arab world will rage. This is a certainty; it is only a matter of time. However, those official Arab regimes, by kneeling before the facts, have given legitimacy to all those movements. What, then, is to be the solution?

The Security Council must deal with this issue as one of occupation, the last case of occupation in the world. The Council has an opportunity before it. Those of sound mind and logic have an opportunity to look into, consider and evaluate a solution — the same solution we saw in South Africa — if indeed there are those who are searching for peace and security in our region.

We know what is taking place. We know full well what will happen. We are therefore not speaking of decisions to be taken. We know what the balance of political power is in the world, in the United Nations and, most particularly, in the Security Council. Since 1990, the Security Council has been in a straightjacket. We therefore direct our statements to minds and consciences. We are recording these words for history.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Chile. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Valdés (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April, and to thank you for having convened this meeting to discuss a conflict whose developments and specific implications are within the purview of the entire world. I should also like to thank the presidency of Norway for its excellent work last month.

Our country associates itself with the statement that will be made by Costa Rica later in the meeting on behalf of the countries of the Rio Group.

Chile vigorously condemns both the horrific suicide attacks against the civilian population of Israel and the military actions being taken against Palestinian cities at intolerable costs to their inhabitants. We also condemn the attack against the headquarters of President Yasser Arafat, the legitimate leader of the Palestinian people. We consider these events an affront to the civilized conscience of mankind and a threat to international peace and security. Chile joins in the overwhelming outcry of the international community resolutely denouncing and repudiating the spiral of violence and demanding its immediate cessation.

My country looks with concern and unease at the fact that the violence affecting us is moving dangerously and proportionately away from the efforts of the international community to achieve peace. The refusal of the parties to comply with Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002) and 1402 (2002) has a serious impact on the credibility of the United Nations and its ability to act as an indispensable tool in the search for a solution to the conflict. It thus also has an impact on Member States and, accordingly, on our own ability to comply with the principles and objectives set out in the Charter in this regard.

As the Council has frequently indicated, only the implementation of the Tenet plan and the speedy realization of the measures contained in the Mitchell report can create avenues towards peace. However, my country understands that, in the light of the seriousness of the current situation, we must focus on creating a minimal degree of trust between the parties so that they can set aside rigidity and retaliation and immediately and simultaneously move forward towards implementing a real ceasefire and a withdrawal of Israeli forces from Palestinian cities, including Ramallah. We call upon the President of the Palestinian Authority to condemn terrorist acts and to call for a cessation of all violent action. For its part, the Government of Israel must put an end to the bellicose actions against the Palestinian Authority and people. That is the only responsible course of action.

Chile believes that those measures cannot be carried out without the presence of a third party in the field with a clear mandate bestowed by the Security Council to verify compliance with the provisions to be agreed once a ceasefire has been agreed. The Council must continue to do its utmost to promote this initiative, in keeping with the responsibility incumbent upon it with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Chile reiterates the fact that there must be a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397

(2002) and 1402 (2002), as well as the Madrid principles. Likewise, we would like to stress the essential role of the Palestinian Authority, which continues to be the legitimate and indispensable partner in the peace negotiations. We appeal for preserving the physical integrity and restoring the freedom of movement of its President. It is once again necessary to reiterate the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to establish an independent, viable and democratic State, and Israel's right to live within secure and internationally recognized borders.

Chile is proud to have large communities of Palestinian and Jewish citizens. For over a century they have made a rich contribution to our culture and development. That is why Chile is experiencing great sorrow at this conflict. We fervently wish that an end be put to the bloodshed in a thrice holy land. We hope that the Security Council, as a result of this debate, will adopt unanimous and decisive measures leading to the implementation of its resolutions in such a way as to strongly encourage the end of the occupation of Palestinian territories, as the only lasting solution to the conflict.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of South Africa. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): My delegation is pleased to see you, Mr. President, preside over this emergency meeting of the Security Council. We joined in calling for this meeting today in response to the full-scale military operations that are under way in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem. We would like to express our appreciation to the Council for scheduling the open debate during the day, when all Member States have an opportunity to express their views before the Council.

We also note with appreciation that the Security Council has taken a step in taking action on our suggestion that it consider meeting with Prime Minister Sharon and President Arafat by instead meeting with their representatives here in New York.

However, we believe that more may need to be done. We would like to remind the Council of the suggestion by some of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement that the Security Council visit the region to obtain a first-hand impression of events on the ground. A visit to Israel and Palestine by the Council at this time would be another signal that the international community is very concerned about the deteriorating situation.

The Non-Aligned Movement is concerned that Israel has for many years refused to comply with Security Council resolutions. This cannot be allowed to continue if the Council is to fulfil its role of maintaining peace and security. At some point this Council will have to stand up to all countries that do not obey its resolutions. We believe that this time is right now.

The Non-Aligned Movement has consistently maintained that there can be no military solution to the Middle East conflict and that occupation, settlement activities and collective punishment of the Palestinian people are the root causes of violence and insecurity in the region. In other words, the enemy in the Middle East is not President Arafat or the Palestinian Authority. The enemy in the Middle East is the lack of peace between Israel and Palestine.

We are therefore deeply distressed by the fact that the Israeli Government has chosen to respond to the symptoms of its own military occupation by using disproportionate lethal force, with a resulting escalation in conflict and tragic consequences for the civilian populations of both Palestine and Israel. Clearly, Israel's decision to destroy Palestinian infrastructure, to humiliate and humble Palestinian civilians and to threaten the life of the legitimate, elected and internationally recognized leader of the Palestinian people cannot be justified as acts of counter-terrorism or even self-defence.

Israel's militaristic approach is all the more inexplicable and inexcusable since it is taking place against a backdrop of renewed efforts by the international community to mediate a peaceful solution to the conflict. The Government of South Africa found it inexplicable that Israel saw fit to prevent President Arafat from travelling to Beirut to endorse and support the Saudi initiative. This action was short-sighted and provocative. It played directly into the hands of the extremists, whose sole goal was to prevent creation of the conditions that would allow the achievement of a ceasefire and promote movement towards a substantial dialogue on peace in line with the requirements of the Mitchell report.

It is also deeply troubling to the South African Government that at precisely the time when both the

Israeli and Palestinian leadership were engaged in discussions with General Zinni about establishing the conditions for the implementation of a ceasefire, extremists once again targeted Israeli civilians in attacks that left scores of dead and injured.

Israel's response to these killings was once again the same massive, predictable military escalation witnessed in the past, which sought to target President Arafat as an enemy, to destroy the Palestinian infrastructure and to try to humiliate and bludgeon the Palestinian people into submission.

Despite these setbacks, the United Nations Secretary-General, the Arab League, the Non-Aligned Movement, the European Union, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and others continue to intensify their efforts to encourage dialogue between the Palestinians and the Israelis. We therefore remain convinced that it is possible to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the crisis. However, the trauma, intense mistrust and fear generated by the current spasm of terrorist acts and military attacks will not be easily overcome, and a credible, multinational monitoring mechanism will be required on the ground to monitor the implementation of agreements between the two parties.

Through the adoption of resolution 1397 (2002), the Security Council has recognized the right of the Palestinian and Israeli peoples to exist side by side, in peace and security with their neighbours, in States of their own. The Council has also adopted resolution 1402 (2002), demanding the immediate cessation of violence and calling for the implementation of a meaningful ceasefire and the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian cities. The least we expect is for Israel to obey Security Council resolutions and to implement particularly resolution 1402 (2002).

In conclusion, please allow me to restate a fundamental truth: Israel's security cannot be achieved through the barrel of a gun. The current cycle of growing violence and the ever increasing death toll of innocent Israelis and Palestinians cannot be ended without a political solution.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of South Africa for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Saudi Arabia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Shobokshi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me first of all to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency for this month. We wish you every success in guiding the Council's deliberations to the desired outcome. I would like to thank you for responding so promptly to our request to convene an emergency meeting of the Security Council to discuss the grave situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. We would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Norway and to congratulate him on the wisdom he showed during his presidency of the Council during the month of March.

The bloody events in occupied Palestine confirm what we have said before: Israel does not desire or seek peace. The current Prime Minister of Israel promised his country that he would bring about conditions of security there. He decided that peace would not bring about security for Israel, and therefore engaged in acts of inhumane oppression and aggression, affecting both the Palestinian people and its territory. He used every cheap trick he could, on the pretext of providing security and with the claim that he was fighting terrorism. Comparing the terrorism committed by Israel with the national Palestinian resistance further exemplifies the gross injustice that is being inflicted on a people seeking to liberate its lands, realize its rights and maintain its dignity and freedom.

The State terrorism committed by Israel is not being undertaken in self-defence or as a means of protecting its citizens. It is being undertaken as a means of protecting its occupation and of consecrating its usurpation of Palestinian territory. Israel has no legitimate right to be in the West Bank, East Jerusalem or the Gaza Strip — areas that it entered in the 1967 war and which it has never left. Palestinians, like any other people living under occupation, have a right — indeed, they are duty-bound — to liberate their land and recover their freedom.

In the face of the ugliness of the Israeli occupation and the carnage committed by its occupying forces, Israel is blaming the Palestinians. The Palestinians should not — Israel claims — have paid attention to occupation; they should have ignored the fact that heavy artillery was used against them. They should have forgotten the thousands of dead and

wounded. They should have forgotten about their property and their rights, which were usurped, and about their homeland, which was destroyed. The Palestinians should not have expressed any indignation; they should not have resisted. They should have enjoyed the bounties of Israeli occupation and the peace of indiscriminate killing; the security of physical liquidation, siege and starvation; the peace of tyranny and destruction. They should have enjoyed the peace represented by arsenals brimming with nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction, and the security brought about by pressure, threats and provocation — the peace of false promises; the unimplemented agreements; the fact that international legitimacy was ignored. They should have enjoyed the peace represented by the building of settlements — the peace of Palestinian parcels of land, created here and there, and under siege by Israelis.

The Palestinian people resorted to resistance after many long years of bitter frustration and lack of hope that justice and equity would come about through a peaceful settlement. Their objectives were not realized because of Israel's intransigence and prevarication, as well as of its failure to implement its commitments. The Palestinians had no option but to turn to the intifada and resistance when the Security Council failed to enforce the resolutions that it adopted and when it rejected the idea of sending international observers to the occupied Palestinian territories. Such observers, if not able to put an end to the situation, could at least have prevented its further deterioration.

What could the Palestinians do, now that they faced humiliation by day and by night? How could they act, given that the international community had turned a completely deaf ear to their rights and had failed to enforce respect for international legitimacy? What could that people do — the people who have been prevented from enjoying peace and stability and the most elementary requirements for a life in dignity, like that enjoyed by all other peoples? How could they face the policies of closure, siege, starvation and collective punishment?

Are the inhumane acts perpetrated by the occupation forces in keeping with the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention as they apply to occupied areas? After all that we have seen, heard and read in newspapers, on radio and on television, can we still wonder why the Palestinians have descended into such hopelessness and despair? The aggressive behaviour of the Israeli Government shows how far it has moved from dialogue and the language of peace, and how much it has resorted to war and destruction as a means of realizing its expansionist goals and policies.

The theory that Israeli might can stifle Palestinian demands is totally and utterly invalid. If Israel planned to turn its aggression into a war between victor and vanquished — a battle that ends up with the Palestinians raising the flag of surrender — it must remember that never in human history has a defenceless people surrendered to brute power, no matter how mighty or strong. The struggle of a people will be rewarded, as long as they stay the course and absorb the strikes of the occupier. The ability to stand is part of right and of justice. Just as other peoples under occupation have won their independence, God willing, the people of Palestine will win its independence, too.

The senseless acts of aggression in occupied Palestine highlight the tyranny of occupation. The Israeli leadership, which came to power under extremely grave and complicated circumstances, seeks to explode the situation in the region, to invert the balance of power and to ensure new faits accomplis before it agrees to sit down at the negotiating table to discuss a final settlement. Now that it has realized that it cannot achieve its ambitions through a process of peace and just settlement, it imagines that time will be in its favour. It imagines that the Palestinians will be forced to accept a new fait accompli because of the Security Council's hesitancy to enforce its resolutions and to send international observers to the occupied Palestinian territories — as it has done to other regions —and because of the fact that the international community has been satisfied simply to denounce the situation without taking measures to force Israel to respect international legitimacy.

That is a flawed vision, and flawed logic. If Israel has succeeded in pushing the Palestinians to despair, it has at the same time brought fear and insecurity upon itself from the Palestinian people, who have lost everything, including their hope of enjoying what other peoples enjoy: liberty, dignity, security and stability.

His Royal Highness, Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul-Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, presented an initiative to attain peace, security and stability for all the region's peoples. The Arab Summit adopted the initiative. That alone

confirms the Arabs' desire for peace and stability for all.

We expect that the Israeli people will not let another opportunity for peace go to waste. We would like the Israelis to bet on justice and fairness and to realize that security will not be achieved through aggression, but through understanding, mutual interests and cooperation.

We call on the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities and act swiftly to press Israel to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy; to immediately end its acts of aggression and lift its siege, without conditions, from the Palestinian people and Yasser Arafat, recognized as its elected leader by all the world's countries; and to withdraw at once from the occupied Palestinian territories, in accordance with the provisions of relevant Council resolutions.

We also call on the Council to deploy international observers and peacekeepers to supervise the Israeli withdrawal and disengage the Palestinian and Israeli parties. In addition, we call on Israel, the occupying Power, to respect the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and the Hague Agreement, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Here, I should like to call attention to a statement by the Secretary-General concerning the Middle East, to the effect that the problem there has been the Israeli occupation, which has led to the undermining of security and to an increase in violence and terror in the region, not to speak of economic deprivation and suffering. These problems are interlinked as one problem, and any attempt to treat it as a problem of security alone will not solve it. We must address the security problem and the political issues at the same time so that we can revive hope among the Palestinian people for a better and more secure future.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Saudi Arabia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Turkey, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Cengizer (Turkey): My delegation congratulates you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and wishes you every success in that very important work. We also wish to express our appreciation of the excellent way in which Ambassador Ole Peter Kolby of Norway conducted the Council during the crucial previous term.

Turkey aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. It should be a sobering call on both parties to assume their responsibilities to their people and to most of the international community. The eruption of outright and dangerously escalating conflict in the Middle East continues unabated, and we are meeting for the second time within the space of not even 96 hours, testifying to the seriousness of the situation. Tragedy abounds; fear and foreboding spill throughout the region. Certainly, this situation is more dangerous than many can bring themselves to avow and is getting more out of hand by the hour. Not only are the Israelis and the Palestinians at the brink, but the whole region is exposed to wider dangers, and this at a time when the international community must deal with a number of other problems and problem areas of unprecedented scope and urgency.

The Middle East is important to the world. So many unsurpassed achievements and great faiths trace their origins to the heart of this region that no one can afford to have the false sense of comfort that a misplaced disinterestedness or an imaginary sense of control are apt to create.

The Middle East is important to Turkey, because it was in Anatolia and in the Middle East that we first met two ancient and cherished friends. It is because of the way in which these friendships have unfolded over nearly a millennium now that we are privileged to be within the fold and at the forefront of the great faiths and traditions of mankind. We have shared friendship, wisdom and timeless memories that we nurture today with the Jewish and Arab nations. Their well-being was important to us in the past; it is important today and will be so tomorrow.

That is precisely why the current situation is unbearable for us. We can accept neither suicide bombings, which are sheer and simple terror in one of its most frightening forms, nor aggression against the legitimate leader of the Palestinian people, President Arafat. Sadly, we are horrified by almost every scene that reaches us from that part of the world these days: civilians covered with blood, headquarters under a barrage of bombs and gunfire. We cannot bear to see this self-destruction.

The events of the past few days and the manner in which this situation is unfolding make clear that the parties cannot be left to their own devices and that the international community, particularly the United States, has a responsibility to intervene to draw the parties back to the negotiation process.

The way to bring the crucial element of negotiation back into the picture is to stand at a fair and equal distance from both parties. In fact, both we and the parties need that, because these rampant delusions about a militarily achieved solution are dangerous, not only to those who have them but also to the region as a whole. The entire geography is being dragged towards a major crisis that might lead to a collapse of stability in more than one sense of the word. Those are reasons enough for the United States, which had the principal role in all previous peace initiatives, not to pause in carrying out its responsibility. Its influence should be brought to bear on the prospects for a peaceful settlement.

Let me be clear on one point: we vehemently condemn the terror perpetrated through suicide bombings, and we fully share the agony of the Israeli people. There can be no plausible degree of terror nor any redeemable reason or understandable motives for it, and there can be no leniency with regard to it. All Palestinians and their leadership have the responsibility to do everything they can to prevent the recurrence of these acts of terror.

At the same time, we strongly protest the treatment to which President Arafat is being subjected by the Israeli Government. No one has the right to commit such disrespect towards a nation's elected leader and to dismantle and destroy its administrative apparatus and mechanisms. What other action, if not those, will push the Palestinian people to succumb to the pressure from the extremist fold? The majority of the Palestinian people keep their faith in peace. We need to safeguard that reality today more than ever, and we must find ways for it to prosper — not, of course, paving the way for the clouds of darkness that extremists wish to bring upon their people.

Security Council resolution 1402 (2002) must be implemented forthwith. Israeli troops must withdraw from Palestinian cities. The Palestinians' human rights are being violated and they urgently require humanitarian assistance. Everyone is asking about the true scale of the ambition behind this military campaign. The world is worried about the destabilization that the campaign is bent on producing.

We cannot bite our tongues while we watch both parties help each other commit suicide. Indeed, Turkey, aware of its historical and contemporary responsibilities, is determined to act in a way that befits our implacable friendship with all peoples of the region. As a matter of fact, the situation requires assistance from every quarter. We deem it essential to draw up a concrete plan that will end occupation, violence and terror. We think all the interested parties should act in a concerted manner to have an effect on developments in the region, on the basis of the Madrid and Oslo Agreements. Turkey is working creatively towards this end.

Turkey has always assumed a conciliatory role in the Middle East conflict. Our forebears achieved peace for no less than half a millennium in that region. For centuries, Turkey ensured that mutual respect and tolerance reigned among the adherents of the three great religions, who were divided into nearly 100 different nations and groups.

I must repeat: we cannot bear this sight of fighting and violence between those who are especially dear to us. As a nation that has traditionally had good relations with both Israel and Palestine, we ask them to let us help them. Better and more honourable prospects are not yet lost. The appeals of the international community, along with the sentiment of friends, are there to be received in good faith.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Turkey for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of the United Arab Emirates, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Shamsi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, on behalf of the United Arab Emirates, it is my pleasure to congratulate you on your assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month and to express our wishes for all success in your task. Also, I cannot fail to express to your predecessor, the representative of Norway, our appreciation for his presidency last month.

I would also like to thank you and the Council members most sincerely for your prompt response by holding this important emergency meeting, which we

hope will reactivate the Council and its responsibilities vis-à-vis events in the Middle East region, where a war of extermination and practices of flagrant ethnic cleansing are being perpetrated by the Israeli Government against the defenceless Palestinian people and their historic leadership.

The Council is meeting again today under exceptionally grave circumstances imposed by images, shown daily on television screens since last Thursday from within Palestinian cities and villages, of human massacres, destruction, a war of extermination and acts of mass detention that have been perpetrated for over a year and a half. In spite of many international resolutions calling on Israel to lift the siege of the Palestinian cities and villages, to respect the Tenet ceasefire plan and the Mitchell recommendations, we are astonished at the Israeli Government's persistence. It has escalated its spiteful, aggressive campaign against the Palestinians, including a premeditated plan to reoccupy Palestinian cities, to destroy completely the Palestinian Authority headquarters and its national institutions, to kill or detain dozens of its employees, to lay siege and to isolate President Arafat and some of his aides. This is one of the most immoral political and legal acts we have witnessed since the creation of the United Nations.

Returning to history, we find that the war declared by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon some days ago against Palestinians and their besieged cities — which are closed to peace advocates, television cameras and international humanitarian organizations — is not new; it is merely an extension, a new episode in the series of criminal acts perpetrated by Sharon, who is known for his hatred of Arabs and Palestinians. How can the world explain the situation in Ramallah today, this tragic repetition of the siege against the Palestinian President, the massacres in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Beirut, events in Bethlehem, Qalqilya, Tulkarm, Jenin and other cities and Palestinian villages and refugee camps? Everybody knows what Sharon and his war machine are perpetrating today — the killing and execution of Palestinian civilians, particularly in Ramallah, where the streets and closed quarters are strewn with dozens of wounded and dead Palestinians, a city closed to ambulances and Red Crescent vehicles. Furthermore, the Israeli army has not stopped its siege or its sniping at anything that moves in the Palestinian cities, villages and refugee camps. Indeed, since last Friday it has cut electricity and water, food supplies and emergency services to defenceless people. It has invaded homes and destroyed hospitals and houses of worship. It has killed civilians under the pretext of pursuing wanted men.

The pretext of security and of fighting terrorism declared by the Sharon Government to justify its increasing violence against the Palestinian people and its plan to reoccupy their land cannot be believed by international public opinion, which every day is witnessing these war crimes against the Palestinian people and their national leadership perpetrated by tanks, warplanes, armoured personnel carriers and Israeli artillery. The international community and the Security Council, which have always condemned terrorism in the past and which have renounced colonialism and occupation in all forms, must differentiate immediately between State terrorism and war crimes perpetrated relentlessly, on a daily basis, by the Israeli army inside occupied Palestinian territory, and the legitimate struggle of the defenceless Palestinian people to lift this unjust occupation, to defend themselves, their properties and their aspirations to an independent State, with Jerusalem as its capital.

While reaffirming our solidarity with and full support for the fraternal Palestinian people and its courageous leadership, we call on the Security Council and all States of influence, particularly the United States of America and the European Union member States, to shoulder their political, legal and moral responsibility vis-à-vis the question of Palestine and the grave developments there. These should include the following measures.

First is the strongest possible rejection and condemnation of these war crimes and Israeli terrorism so that Israel does not misunderstand the message of the international community, as enshrined in Security Council resolutions, particularly the most recent one, resolution 1402 (2202), calling for a withdrawal from all Palestinian territories that were reoccupied in violation of previous agreements — the Oslo Agreement in particular — and other relevant international resolutions.

Secondly, we must demand an immediate and unconditional Israeli withdrawal, which must also mean lifting the siege against the President of the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Arafat, as the legitimate

elected leader of the Palestinian people, and the release of thousands of Palestinian detainees. Thirdly, the dispatch of international observers from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, human rights organizations and international emergency aid organizations in order to protect the Palestinian people and ensure provision of food, medicine and humanitarian assistance to the thousands of displaced persons and to identify those Israeli war criminals who have killed hundreds of people, including women and children.

Fourthly, Israel must be compelled to pay adequate compensation for the grave damage to the Palestinian infrastructure and property of defenceless Palestinian civilians. Fifthly, we must promote and strengthen the role of the "quartet" of the United States of America, the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United Nations, based on evenhandedness and transparency in order to help the two parties — the Palestinians and the Israelis — to implement the Tenet plan and the Mitchell recommendations and to resume dialogue and peace negotiations from the point at which they stopped in the year 2000.

Sixthly, we must support and adopt the historic peace initiative of the Arab leaders at the Beirut summit as the strategic basis for a comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian question and the Arab-Israeli dispute, including a just and comprehensive peace based on international legitimacy and the relevant United Nations resolutions, including General Assembly resolution 181 (II) and Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1402 (2002), and the principle of land for peace.

In looking forward to the declaration in the near future of the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, with Jerusalem as its capital, as a fundamental reason to strive for a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, we express the hope that the international community will provide urgently needed financial, economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people in order to heal their wounds and to allow them to rebuild the towns, villages and economic and social infrastructures that have regrettably been destroyed by Sharon and his accomplices in war crimes.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of the United Arab Emirates for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Malaysia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation wishes to thank you, Sir, at this early stage of your presidency, for convening this urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the grave situation in Palestine. We associate ourselves fully with the statement made by Ambassador Kumalo of South Africa as Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement. We are grateful to Ambassador Al-Kidwa of Palestine for updating us on the latest developments and for his very restrained remarks, in spite of the provocation on the ground. It must have been extremely difficult for him to do so.

The entire world watches with utter consternation and disbelief the blatant and ruthless actions taken by Israel to intimidate, terrorize and subdue the Palestinian people and their leadership. Day and night, through its overwhelming military might, Israel has unleashed a reign of terror — for that is what it is — against the Palestinian people. I am therefore not at all embarrassed to sit where I am. It is at least a symbolic support for the people of Palestine at this critical time.

With the all-out military onslaught mounted by the Israeli armed forces against Palestinian towns and cities and the siege being laid to the headquarters of President Yasser Arafat in Ramallah, the intent of the Israeli Government has become crystal clear. Indeed, the Israeli Government has made no bones about its real intention. Its objective, carried out in the name of destroying the so-called "infrastructure of terrorism", is actually to dismember and dismantle the infrastructure of the Palestinian National Authority and to cripple and render impotent its leadership. In doing so, it is destroying the very foundations of political dialogue between the two sides that had been painstakingly laid down and built upon through the Madrid and Oslo processes. By isolating President Arafat and rendering him "irrelevant" — that is the word that has been used — the Israeli Government is tearing up all the agreements, accords and understandings arrived at between the two sides since the beginning of the peace process. This is insanity and it must be stopped. The Israeli Government must be told in no uncertain terms that there can be no military "solution" to the problem,

as no military might, however overwhelming, can ever vanquish the will and determination of the Palestinian people to establish an independent and sovereign State in their homeland. If there is just one lesson that Israel should have learned throughout this entire tragic conflict in the Middle East, it is that lesson.

The situation in Palestine is a matter of grave concern to the international community, but especially to the Islamic countries. In this regard, my delegation wishes to draw the Council's attention to the statement issued by the foreign ministers of the States members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) at their current meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. While the special ministerial meeting of the OIC was convened for the specific purpose of dealing with the issue of the global campaign against international terrorism and the role of Islamic countries in that campaign, the ministers found it necessary to pronounce themselves on the situation in Palestine. This statement will be formally communicated to the President of the Security Council very shortly by Mali, as the current chairman of the OIC foreign ministers, but, as the host of that meeting, Malaysia deems it appropriate to highlight at this important meeting of the Council the salient points of that statement, which are as follows.

The Conference strongly condemns Israel's recent storming of Palestinian cities and villages, as well as the headquarters of the Palestinian presidency, and its endangering the life of President Arafat and other Palestinian leaders. The Conference considers this assault a violation of all international norms and laws and the culmination of State terrorism practised by Israel.

The Conference requests the Security Council, the two sponsors of the peace process and the European Union to assume their responsibility to immediately stop the Israeli aggression and effect the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all occupied Arab and Palestinian territories.

The Conference reaffirms the continuing support of the Islamic States for the Palestinian people's struggle against Israeli occupation and for the restoration of their inalienable national rights, including the right of return for refugees and the right to self-determination and to establish their sovereign State, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

While condemning Israel's practice of State terrorism, the Conference calls on the international community to take immediate action to stop the Israeli aggression and illegitimate practices and to lift the blockade. The Conference also requests the Security Council to take the necessary measures to provide international protection for the Palestinian people and to apply deterrent sanctions against Israel.

The Conference considers Israeli terrorist actions and aggressive practices as posing a threat to international peace and security and as dragging the region towards an all-out war, and therefore necessitating immediate action by the Security Council under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

The Conference welcomes the Arab peace initiative taken at the recent Arab summit conference in Beirut and requests the Security Council to put in place a mechanism for its implementation in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Council and international legitimacy.

It is the hope of my Government and that of all OIC member States that, in addressing the critical situation in Palestine, the Council will give serious consideration to this statement. Several of the OIC member States have spoken before me and my delegation fully associates itself with their eloquent and even passionate statements.

All peace-loving countries abhor terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and have joined in the global alliance to fight this scourge. The Islamic nations have done no less and are meeting in my capital city, Kuala Lumpur, to coordinate their actions so as to contribute effectively to this campaign, from which we must emerge victorious. However, it is necessary for the international community to differentiate between terrorism per se and the legitimate struggle for independence against foreign occupation and alien domination. While the killing of innocent civilians by individuals or groups of individuals cannot be justified and must be condemned, so must the massacre of innocents by the apparatus of the State. If we, the international community, are serious in our quest to combat terrorism, there cannot be double standards.

The Council must exercise its responsibility under the Charter and take immediate action to stop the carnage. It must act promptly to save the Palestinian people and its imperilled leadership, who is about to be

disposed of by an Israeli Government that is bent on a military victory at all costs. While we welcome the adoption of Council resolutions 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002 and 1402 (2002) of 30 March 2002 as positive steps in addressing the situation, we call on the Council to back its pronouncements with immediate and concrete action. It is imperative for the Council to follow up on these resolutions, in particular, resolution 1402 (2002) which, inter alia, calls for an immediate ceasefire and the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian cities, including Ramallah. It is important for the Council not to allow itself to be sidelined again. To take no action would be tantamount to condoning the aggressive policies and actions of the Israeli Government and, worse still, would allow the situation to explode into a catastrophe of monumental proportions, which we would all regret.

The situation in the occupied territories is intolerable to the Palestinian people. Indeed, it is intolerable even to watch on the television screen. My delegation has warned time and again that unless immediate and resolute efforts are made by the Council to stop the violence we might reach a point of no return. In our view, that point has almost been reached.

We continue to hold the belief that what is urgently needed to stop the violence and arrest the slide towards war is for the Council to authorize the dispatch of a United Nations or international peacekeeping or monitoring force to the occupied territories, or at the very least to dispatch, initially, a Council fact-finding mission. We are therefore grateful to the Chair of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement for renewing the Movement's proposal to the Council just now.

Given the deep antipathy between the Palestinians and the Israelis, the intervention of a neutral third party is imperative. This is where we feel the Security Council can and should play a critical role. Along with others who are prepared to do so, it must become fully engaged in the effort to stop the violence and must join in the search for a lasting peace between the Arabs and the Israelis. It must stop the rampaging that is relentlessly going on in the occupied territories. It must help give substance to the vision of a Palestinian State that was articulated in Council resolution 1397 (2002).

The United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, remain the last hope for the Palestinian people. They look to the United Nations, as the champion of the oppressed, for the restitution of their rights as a people — rights that they have been deprived of for decades. My delegation is hopeful, Sir, that under your astute leadership, the Council will be able to muster the necessary political will and the wisdom and courage to do what is right and just for the Palestinian people.

In conclusion, Sir, let me commend you most sincerely for allowing non-members of the Council to address the Council before members have the opportunity to speak. I can assure you that this is very much appreciated by the non-members.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Malaysia for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Brazil. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil): Let me first congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and thank the members of the Council for convening this timely debate.

The international community comes once more to this Chamber to express its sadness in the face of the horrendous events that continue to take place in the Middle East. Brazil has consistently advocated a peaceful solution to the conflict. In the face of recent events, the Brazilian Government has reiterated that position in press communiqués over the past days. We also join the Rio Group in its call released yesterday for an immediate cessation of all acts of terrorism, provocation, incitement and destruction.

There are definitely no positive developments on the ground in the Middle East. But if there is a single trend that we welcome and encourage in the most vivid terms, it is the growing responsiveness of the Council to the challenge before the international community at this moment. In times of despair and disappointment for so many in the Middle East, it is towards the United Nations that world public opinion looks in the hope that reason and peace will eventually prevail. It is only natural that high hopes are placed on possible action by the Security Council. We welcome the recent adoption of resolutions 1397 (2002) and 1402 (2002) and fully back their terms. But we strongly believe that the

Council can certainly do more to fully assert its responsibilities in this matter.

The Brazilian Government remains deeply alarmed by the growing and fast deterioration of the situation. We call upon the parties to comply immediately and thoroughly with Council resolutions 1397 (2002) and 1402 (2002), especially with regard to a meaningful ceasefire. We join the international community in the call on Israel to suspend all military actions in the occupied territories, to roll back illegal occupation and settlement activities, to respect the Palestinian Authority and its leadership and to withdraw, without delay, from Palestinian cities. The threat that military escalation has brought to holy shrines of all three major monotheistic religions must stop immediately.

Recent military actions against the Palestinian Authority compound in Ramallah are, at the least, deplorable. The Israeli authorities must understand that excessive use of force does not generate any sense of security for their own people. On the contrary, it only fuels the dreadful spiral of violence and reprisals that makes the vision even more remote for everyone. We condemn the decision to isolate President Arafat and the attempts to threaten his physical integrity and demoralize his leadership over the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian people. Any attempt to exile him from his homeland would be yet a further and a grave mistake. It cannot, and will not, be accepted by the international community.

We fully understand the grievances of both Israelis and Palestinians. We all want their suffering to stop. But the disproportionate and lethal use of force by Israel as well as unacceptable acts of terrorism and suicide bombings by Palestinian militants only jeopardize even further any prospect of a lasting political settlement to the conflict in the Middle East. We are dismayed by the fact that the two parties are failing to keep the course towards a negotiated solution to the conflict and that their daily attitude towards each other seems to be designed to make that goal even more distant.

The Brazilian Government reaffirms its preparedness to cooperate fully with the Security Council in the implementation of actions designed to resume the peace process and promote peaceful coexistence between Israel and a Palestinian State. We remain faithful to the aspiration of the State of Israel to exist within secure and recognized borders as well as to that of Palestine to an independent, democratic and economically viable State.

No military solution can ever bring about that vision. Nor will it be achieved through the isolated efforts of any party no matter how powerful and influential it may be. The only possible route is respect for human rights and for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. The only possible instruments are those based on the legitimacy of international law. Resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the principle of land for peace are the points of reference for the resumption of the peace process in a negotiated settlement between the parties. A ceasefire is urgently needed, but it cannot be obtained through the expansion of illegal occupation and the use of increased armed force. No ceasefire will stand in the absence of a political framework.

The practical question before us today is what should the Security Council do to further the cause of reason and peace. We think we need more active involvement of the Council on the ground. We believe that the Council has a special responsibility to use its tools in order to demand compliance with its decisions. We think that it is the Council's duty to call upon the representatives of Israel and Palestine to explain, at the highest possible level, what they are effectively doing to respond to the Council's demands. We believe that the Council should be directly briefed by all emissaries whose efforts the international community continues to support. We remain committed to the idea of establishing an international monitoring mechanism to help the parties implement the recommendations of the Mitchell report and the Tenet plan and support the efforts carried out on the ground by the special envoy Anthony Zinni. An international presence, with the full backing of the United Nations, seems indispensable now.

Last but not least, the Security Council must lay out a clear strategy to move ahead with new and constructive approaches, such as the initiative by Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, recently endorsed by the League of Arab States. Let me reaffirm that Brazil will strongly support any initiative decided upon by the Security Council with a view to achieving political freedom, peace, stability and prosperity for all in the Middle East.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Brazil for his kind words addressed to me.

The last speaker on my list before I suspend the meeting is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): Thank you, Mr. President, for accommodating me at this late hour. I know that we are all running against time. I promised that I would be brief, and I will be.

First, my congratulations go to you, Sir, on your presidency. Then, I express profound appreciation to my colleague, Ambassador Peter Kolby, for a very productive presidency, at the last meeting of which the Council produced its resolution 1402 (2002).

The question is, how long shall we continue to repeat our scripts one after the other? The time has now come for action. The Security Council must address itself to how to enforce its decisions. These debates reflect international sentiment both here in the Chamber and in the outside world, but now the Security Council must meet in some other room and seriously address the question of the enforceability of its decisions.

The Council met only last Friday to consider the grievous situation in Palestine. Resolution 1402 (2002) was adopted to reverse the spiralling violence and bloodshed. Painfully, there has been no let-up in the scale of carnage. Many more people have died, and violence has generated more violence. This only demonstrates how helpless the Security Council has become and how scanty is the respect for its resolutions and decisions. This trend is not only a cause for serious concern, but it is also alarmingly indicative of the inability of the Council to uphold its moral authority and its Charter obligations.

What is being said today by most of my colleagues one after the other was said at the last meeting and at earlier meetings, so I shall not repeat all the things I said in my last statement. I would only say that it is time to seriously address the question of implementing the outstanding resolutions of this Council without selectivity or delay. The very credibility of this body depends on that.

We strongly urge all concerned to fulfil their Charter obligations and to take the necessary steps to implement Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002) and 1402 (2002), ensuring an immediate and effective ceasefire along with an Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian cities, followed up with the resumption of the peace process, including the implementation of the Tenet work plan and the Mitchell report recommendations.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Pakistan for the kind words he addressed to me.

In view of the lateness of the hour, I would also like to thank the interpreters for their understanding.

I shall now suspend this meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.40 p.m.